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INTERIM, incorporated supported employment and education program : a structured peer support group

Kristina Baker
California State University, Monterey Bay

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Capstone Project

INTERIM, Incorporated Supported Employment and Education Program: A Structured Peer Support Group

Keywords: Bipolar Disorder, Mental Illness, Peer Counseling, Peer Support Group, Psychiatric Disabilities, Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder, Social Rehabilitation, Supported Education, Vocational Rehabilitation

Abstract: INTERIM/SEES's Hartnell Peer Support Group is an essential tool in maintaining contact with and providing supportive services for psychiatrically disabled students during stressful times during the semester. It enhances existing supportive services available on campus for SEES clients. It provides them with a weekly private classroom meeting space, and a curriculum designed to meet their needs.

Executive Summary:

**Interim, Incorporated Supported Employment and Education
Services Program: A Structured Peer Support Group**

The de-institutionalization of persons with serious mental illnesses in the 1960's, has raised serious questions. Though legislation has been passed to protect members of this population from unnecessary violations of their civil rights and to guarantee equal access to educational services, uncertainty remains in how to effectively serve their particular needs. Locally, Monterey County Department of Behavioral Health (MCBH) provides case management for people with mental illnesses. Locally, this population, as defined by MCBH, is comprised of individuals with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or schizoaffective disorder (a combination of the former two conditions).

INTERIM, Inc. is a non-profit agency providing housing services to MCBH clients. It has provided services in housing, vocational development, and social support for the past 25 years. Developed as an alternative to institutionalization, it is the only non-profit agency to provide these services in the Monterey County area. It is a service vendor to MCBH (Mitchell & Spacher, 2001). Through its vocational rehabilitation program, Supported Employment and Education Services (SEES), INTERIM currently assists mental health clients to find education and meaningful jobs. SEES provides employment and educational support to all clients referred by MCBH, regardless of whether they are living in INTERIM-provided housing. SEES has expanded its client base and increased the accessibility of its services. Currently, it serves approximately 200 clients per year, approximately 70 of which utilize its educational services. Peer Support Groups are facilitated weekly at both local community colleges (Hartnell and Monterey Peninsula), by SEES personnel. Approximately 30 clients are currently enrolled, or wish to enroll, at Hartnell College (Hinds, 2001, INTERIM, Inc./SEES, 2000). My project is to raise attendance levels and group effectiveness at Hartnell College by securing a private meeting space and developing a simple, strength-based curriculum to be used by the group for mutual encouragement and skill enhancement.

Need to be addressed:

Over the past 10 years, the need for vocational and/or educational guidance specifically designed for psychiatrically disabled community members has drawn particular attention in the field of psychiatric social work (University of Michigan School of Social Work [UMSSW], 2000). Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (P.L. 101-336) have been instrumental in bringing this about by mandating non-discriminatory practices in post-secondary educational institutions (Mowbray, Collins, & Bybee, 1999; Unger, 1990; UMSSW, 2000). Persons with severe and chronic mental illnesses, though protected by these laws, have often failed to receive appropriate supports as they sought to advance their education (Egnew, 1997; Loewen, 1993; Mowbray, Collins, & Bybee, 1999; Mowbray & Megivern, 1999; Unger, 1990; UMSSW, 2000).

Education has often been held as a necessity to effective job preparation and a higher quality of life (Egnew, 1993; Loewen, 1993; Mowbray, Collins, & Bybee, 1999; Mowbray & Megivern, 1999; Mowbray, Moxley, & Brown, 1993; Unger, 1990). SEES provides educational support toward this end. SEES educational program is designed to meet the needs of each client it serves, whether their goal is completion of one class in a community college, or completion of an advanced degree in a four-year university. Integral to its design is the social rehabilitation model. This model is built on the concept of client normalization through community integration (California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies [CASRA], 1985; College of San Mateo [CSM], 1996; Unger, Danley, Kohn, & Hutchinson, 1987). This is accomplished by assisting clients in changing their self-concept from that of a mental patient to that of a student and community member (College of San Mateo [CSM], 1996; Egnew, 1997; Kleinfelter & Sonne, 2000; Marshall, 1997; Mowbray, Collins, & Bybee, 1999; UMSSW, 2000).

Background/history of need:

Historically, in psychiatric treatment environments, clients have been discouraged from making and meeting goals. Participation in work or pursuit of educational goals

were often regarded as stressors, likely to precede re-occurrence of psychiatric symptoms (Cook & Solomon, 1993). Hence, studies have shown that mental health professionals have often neglected the educational goals of their clients (Mowbray, Collins, & Bybee, 1999; Mowbray, Moxley, & Brown, 1993). SEES provides support services that prevent the onset of these symptoms by listening to clients, assisting clients to develop problem solving skills, and promoting effective stress management techniques. In doing so it embodies the philosophy of social rehabilitation defined by California Association of Social Rehabilitation Agencies (CASRA) and assists in moving clients toward self-chosen, attainable goals. The Peer Support Group I have chosen for my capstone is one instrument in making these services available to clients, encouraging them to provide support among themselves, built upon their common experiences as students with psychiatric disabilities. This has been a successful model, essential in many pilot supported education programs (CSM, 1996; Cooper, 1993; Egnew, 1997; Loewen, 1993; Marshall, 1997; Mowbray, Moxley, & Brown, 1993; Parten, 1993; Ryglewicz & Glynn, 1993; UMSSW, 2000). It is currently successfully implemented by SEES.

INTERIM specializes in providing housing for psychiatrically disabled adults in Monterey County, adhering firmly to the social rehabilitation model in its case management and counseling services. This model is implemented through client activities that enhance independence, pursuit of life goals, and community integration. These include the pursuit of an education and meaningful work (Egnew, 1993; Kleinfelter & Sonne, 2000; Unger, Danley, Kohn, & Hutchinson, 1987). Established as an alternative to institutionalization in 1976, INTERIM's vocational endeavors began with a cookie baking company, known as Sunflour Cookies. Though this business came to an end after several years of operation, it came to be known as a model for food preparation companies designed to provide work opportunities for the psychiatrically disabled (Mitchell & Spacher, 2001).

Initially, supported employment and education services were contracted by MCBH (then Monterey County Mental Health (MCMH) to Rehabilitative Services of

Northern California (RSNC)(Egnew, 1993; Hinds, 2001). Later, in 1996, MCBH chose to utilize INTERIM as a vocational and educational supportive service vendor (Hinds, 2001). INTERIM/SEES was then established to continue to meet this need in a timely and effective manner.

An education support group was a part of INTERIM/SEES mobile educational support services from its inception. The Peer Support Group, which comprises my Capstone is similar to those offered by SEES from 1996-the present. Though previously held in the cafeteria and dining area of the Hartnell Student Center, this Peer Support Group is now being held in a private classroom location. This arrangement has changed over the years SEES as has provided services on the Hartnell campus. Primarily, the location of the group has been adjusted in response to clients and DSPS feedback. Formerly, no-credit Peer Counseling (COU28 and/or COU103) and Making College Count classes (COU103) were offered as part of the Hartnell College curriculum geared primarily to the needs of psychiatrically disabled students re-entering the post-secondary educational environment. A support group was made available as an additional service (Egnew, 1997). Its purpose was to provide additional support as clients began to attend school, and during times of stress.

Following the introduction of a new series of classes known as "Connect for Success," these important resources for support and bonding, available primarily for students with psychiatric disabilities, were temporarily replaced by a mainstreamed Peer Advising (COU28) class and other mainstream-gearred skill-building classes. These classes are conducted over selected weeks of the semester, or in weekend workshops. They are now part of the Hartnell curriculum, presented as a pre-requisite for graduation. This is because research has indicated that they help to reduce the drop-out rate (Hartnell College, 2000). However, the Peer Support Group has remained intact. Previously, the Peer Support Group had been informal and loosely structured. In my Capstone Project, I will introduce a structure to the group participants by combining two of the three prototypes of supported education:

- Self-contained classroom
- Mobile support
- On-site support

The self-contained classroom, previously available through MCBH sponsored classes, is currently available for SEES clients through the Peer Support Group. SEES also provides mobile support. Hartnell College instructional staff and DSPS provide on-site support (Egnew, 1997; Unger, 1993; Unger, 1990). Presently, the group serves as both a meeting place in which to share challenges and solutions, and as an informal classroom where clients are taught communication skills, stress-management skills, and educational planning.

Project description:

My Capstone Project involves the re-introduction of a private yet informal meeting space and specialized curriculum in which clients are encouraged to share solutions of a confidential nature as a group. These are important elements in ensuring their future educational success (CSM, 1996; Loewen, 1993). Facilitated collaboratively by myself, a SEES Education Specialist, and the Program Director, the newly restructured Hartnell College Peer Support Group is designed to encourage constructive sharing of clients' life experiences, and their relevance to the pursuit of present goals.

Group structure includes participant check-ins relating to the transitional times of the semester, including registration, receipt of class syllabi and books, mid-terms, and final exams. Also included are presentations by participants, INTERIM staff, and representatives of community agencies presenting resources for education and career development for the clients. SEES has been provided (with the assistance of DSPS) with a private classroom in order to facilitate this structure and to ensure the confidentiality of participants. Though class-like, the new group curriculum does not constitute a class per se. Rather, it is intended to provide a framework within which common barriers to educational success may be addressed. These barriers may include absenteeism, inappropriate class behaviors, under-utilization of available support by student/clients,

and poor academic performance. Possible problems are addressed in a creative, positive manner, in which the rewards of putting forth one's maximum effort in improving oneself, are emphasized. Exercises in hand-out form such as "Listen (CSM, 1996)," "Feelings," "The Power of Music," "Going to Class Can be Fun," "Initiative!" and "Anger Management, Conflict Resolution (Institute of HeartMath, 1996; Said, 1998)" are introduced as part of this simple, new curriculum. Some have been used previously in Peer Counseling (COU28) and Making College Count (COU103) classes. Others are of my own design, or products of my research. Simple, short art exercises such as a group drawing, and individual collages are also useful in encouraging clients to express themselves through creative endeavor. A Financial Aid Workshop is planned before the end of the semester, where assistance will be made available for clients to complete their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms.

A weekly meeting place also helps me to better assist clients in utilizing resources available on the Hartnell Campus. SEES works collaboratively with Hartnell Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) to provide academic counseling, and links to important student resources on campus. The support group is designed to promote relationship building between program personnel and clients prior to intake with both SEES and Hartnell DSPS, registration for classes, and during the course of the semester.

Negotiation for appointment times and the completion of a significant amount of paperwork are unavoidable parts of this process. Students with psychiatric disabilities are often anxious and easily demoralized during this process (Loewen, 1993). Often, these clients are hypersensitive to the possibility of failure, often attempting school following repeated setbacks (Parten, 1993; Ryglewicz & Glynn, 1993). Preparation and support are important in meeting the demands of on-site student service utilization, an integral yet often challenging part of the education process (Cook & Solomon, 1993; Loewen, 1993). My Project both serves as a tool in the assessment of clients' commitment to pursue educational goals, and facilitates service delivery to individual clients by providing a regular weekly meeting place on campus where these supports can occur. Examples of these include:

- Making appointments for intake with DSPS and SEES prior to registration for classes
- Arranging for follow-up appointments with DSPS
- Reviewing and signing documents required by SEES and/or Hartnell College for continued service delivery

Based on the needs of the participants, I check in regarding their need for these support services and discuss their common experiences in utilizing them. I encourage them to take a shared look at what they have learned from their experiences. Acceptance and the value of both positive and negative experiences are emphasized to strengthen the students' sense of self (Gilbert, Heximer, & Walker, 1997). A reward system with special certificates is available to those who participate regularly in the group and/or make a presentation on an accomplishment they have made or an obstacle they have overcome that may be motivational to others in the group. Several participants now look forward to obtaining their certificates at the end of the semester.

Client participation has been impacted by the development of Hartnell's recently developed "Connect for Success" program. This program, comprised of a series of preparatory classes, was designed to meet the needs of a variety of special needs students, yet psychiatrically disabled students are often lost in the shuffle. Special needs students come from diverse backgrounds, with varying needs. These needs may not coincide with the specific needs particular to students with psychiatric disabilities. Indeed, although Hartnell College does provide services to students with disabilities, services available to students with severe and chronic psychiatric disabilities are not addressed in a comprehensive manner in either Hartnell's annual report, nor on its web pages (Hartnell College, 2000; Hartnell College, 2001). At times, Hartnell has been remiss in serving these students in a cooperative manner. According to Robert Egnew, former Director of MCBH:

"After three years of operation, the supported education program continues to get only minimal cooperation from the DSPS offices on each campus. While two college administrations continue to support the program, they do so, in part, because they are only required to provide a minimal amount of financial support." (1997, p. 34-35)

This is why SEES services are so important to psychiatrically disabled students on campus. A well-organized Peer Support Group is key to the effectiveness of our services at local community colleges and the ultimate success of our clients in meeting their educational and vocational goals.

The steps I took to establish this group, including specific dates of implementation, are as follows:

- i. Contract meeting with Program Director, INTERIM Deputy Director, Education Specialist, and Representatives of Hartnell College DSP&S. December 13, 2000.
- ii. Planning with field mentor, Carolyn Hinds. Began November 16, 2000.
- iii. Development of a curricular program, which includes client check-ins related to the stages of the semester, and the appointment of guest speakers from among the clients, INTERIM staff, and representatives of community agencies. In progress.
- iv. Secured a room at Hartnell College for a regular meeting place for meetings, which began February 8, 2001. Completed.
- v. Phone and send flyers to all clients in Hartnell educational program, inviting them to group. January 31-February 7, 2001. Ongoing as needed.
- vi. Use group as an opportunity for participants to complete program evaluations. Thursday, February 8-Thursday, May 17. Ongoing as needed.
- vii. Continue meetings February 8 through May 17, 2001, except for week of Spring Recess, April 9-April 16, 2001.
- viii. Prepare plan for group to meet during summer semester. April, 2001. Ongoing as needed.
- ix. Design and distribute specific evaluations for clients and for Hartnell DSP&S to determine the effectiveness of the group and possible areas for improvement. February 1 through May 17, 2001. Ongoing as needed.

Vision and Major Learning Outcomes (MLOs):

This project reflects the California State University Monterey Bay vision statement by providing and assisting in the development of a needed service in the Tri-County region. It supports the CSUMB vision statement in that it is "student and society centered" and that it meets "needs relevant to communities in the immediate Tri-County region (specifically Monterey County)." (California State University Monterey Bay [CSUMB], 1994)

I will demonstrate my proficiencies in the seven Major Learning Outcomes (MLOs), required for graduation in the Collaborative Health and Human Services (CHHS) major as follows:

Collaboration: I will demonstrate my ability to collaborate by communicating with agency personnel, clients, DSPS, and MCBH to develop, implement, evaluate, and recruit personnel to provide continuing support for INTERIM/SEES educational support groups. I will obtain a private meeting space by collaborating with Hartnell personnel responsible for furnishing one. I will collaborate with SEES personnel to obtain source material for my curriculum and for their assistance in co-facilitation when necessary. I will collaborate with clients to encourage their attendance and development of leadership skills in the group. I will collaborate with MCBH case managers if clients are in need of support and voice this need in the group setting.

Conflict Resolution and Negotiation: I will demonstrate my conflict resolution and negotiation abilities as facilitator of this group. I will continually seek client input for group activity planning. I will mediate any disagreements among participants in order to find an outcome satisfactory to all group members. I will develop and implement a specific part of my curriculum to teach clients effective communication skills in conflict situations.

Information Management: I will demonstrate my ability to manage information by taking detailed case notes as required for all education groups facilitated by INTERIM/SEES. These case notes will be prepared using their database program, Caminar, with which I am familiar and regularly use in the course of the performance of my job description. In addition, I will prepare a colorful and descriptive Power Point presentation with some animation for the final presentation at the Capstone Festival.

Knowledge of Health and Human Services: I will demonstrate my knowledge of health and human services by developing a curriculum based on commonly observed barriers to success experienced by my client population, and by answering questions presented by clients in the group setting in an accurate, respectful, and professional manner. I will make myself available to answer questions clients may have regarding navigating the mental health care system, the community college system, and the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. I will encourage clients to discuss their problems and solutions in living with psychiatric disabilities, with a special emphasis on self-care.

Leadership: I will demonstrate my leadership ability by helping clients to empower INTERIM/SEES clients in a educational setting. I will encourage them to find and share solutions to obstacles that present themselves in their educational pursuits and in their lives. I will serve as an intermediary between clients and Hartnell College staff when difficulties arise, and assist in finding feasible solutions, with clients needs held as the primary concern. I will encourage clients to resolve their own problems with the assistance on-site personnel and will commend them whenever they do so.

Personal and Professional Communication: I will demonstrate my ability to communicate written, oral, and Power Point presentation of Capstone in my Graduation Portfolio and Capstone Festival. I will also communicate effectively both verbally and in writing with INTERIM/SEES clients, INTERIM staff, DSPS, and MCBH in the process of developing, implementing, and providing inter-agency feedback regarding client activities in the group setting. I will gather information from the Program Director, Education Specialist, and former Education Specialists regarding how our educational support groups would best operate, and improve in the future.

Personal and Professional Ethics: I will demonstrate my ability to work with staff and clients in a human service agency in an ethical manner by observing confidentiality of clients at all times. I will assist in the design and use of consent forms for clients, informing them that they will be participating in my capstone project by their attendance. I will also assist in developing a consent form for clients whose photographs are to be used in my Capstone presentation. I will effectively explain to clients the implications of their signing these forms and keep the signed forms on file for future reference. Accommodations will be made for those who do not wish to sign the release. All issues discussed at group level will be confidential to INTERIM/SEES, Hartnell DSP&S, and MCBH.

Format for Final Presentation: My chosen format for my Final Presentation will be Power Point. After obtaining appropriate consent I will use photographs of clients who wish to be photographed or have their work photographed for the purpose of my Capstone. My presentation will include photographs of the group meeting space and

Hartnell College landmarks, such as the College Panther. I will also use images available from clip art and web pages for a colorful presentation with eye-catching animation.

Conclusion:

This project will benefit SEES clients wishing to further their education by providing confidential, structured support for them in a group setting. A fresh, simple, creative curriculum focused on motivation, goal setting, stress management, and community involvement will assist in bonding them as a group and encouraging them to share solutions to the problems they encounter in the educational environment. The regular meeting time and place will assist clients in arranging for other services and supports, including transportation, DSPS follow up, and financial aid. More importantly, it will provide clients with a safe place to speak openly about their experiences with psychiatric disabilities with each other, and discuss the challenges inherent for them in the process of integrating with the campus and community mainstream (CSM, 1996; Loewen, 1993; Mowbray, Moxley & Brown, 1993; Parten, 1993; UMSSW, 2000).

Finally, it will serve to provide a meeting place for students who are exploring their educational options, with plans to enroll in the future. According to the "choose-get-keep" model used at Boston University, the pioneer setting for supported education, these clients are in the choosing stage and are in most critical need of encouragement, support, and accurate information regarding the often overwhelming undertaking of formulating educational goals (Sullivan, Nicolellis, Danley, & MacDonald-Wilson, 1993).

Several means of evaluating group effectiveness are currently in place. Client satisfaction surveys have been distributed and collected from the majority of the participants. These will continue to be distributed, collected, and analyzed each semester as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of the group and gathering suggestions from clients

regarding how the group may improve. Another indicator of group effectiveness is increased group attendance, as measured through group attendance sheets. I will make a statistical analysis of group attendance both in terms of number of clients attending and

frequency of group visits in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the new group meeting place and curriculum.

Finally, group participation is intended to positively impact students' receipt of support of DSPS services and progress in their classes. Hartnell College DSPS requires all students receiving its services to visit its office for supportive services a minimum of four times per semester (Davis & Howell, 2000). If the group's effectiveness is improved as a result of my Capstone Project, the percentage of SEES clients who visit the DSPS office for these four scheduled appointments should increase. The availability of an effective Peer Support group is in compliance the Hartnell and SEES Procedures Service Agreement, Version 2.3, last updated on December 13, 2000. Article 3c of the section outlining Procedures for Continuing Students, the document calls for the SEES Education Specialist to "conduct an on-going campus student support group as well as providing off campus support." (Davis & Howell, 2000).

Improved coordination of SEES and DSPS services should be positively impacted by the continued implementation of my Capstone. The development of a formal evaluation procedure between SEES and DSPS is a future goal to work toward to ensure continued effectiveness of the new Peer Support Group structure. The ultimate goal is to assist students with psychiatric disabilities to access the support they need to complete their classes, and to form a support network among themselves for greater personal empowerment. As students realize their successes, the group provides them with opportunities to mentor each other, encouraging each other onward toward new goals (CSM, 1996; Marshall, 1999; Mowbray, Collins, & Bybee, 1999; Parten, 1993).

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[February 20. 2001]

Hartnell Peer Support Group Curriculum Spring 2001 Semester

Thursdays, 2/8/01-6/8/01

Classroom Unit 1

Facilitator: Kristina Baker, Supported Education Assistant

2/8/01-First Group Meeting

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Ideas for Future Groups

☞☞Goals and Setbacks-How to Cope

2/15/01-Second Group Meeting, w/Amy Barret-Burnett

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Feelings

☞☞Group Sharing

2/22/01-Third Group Meeting

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Music Handout-The Power of Music

☞☞Favorite Music Examples and Discussion

3/1/01-Fourth Group Meeting, w/ Sue -Ellen Stringer, MSW

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Relaxation Visualization

☞☞Group Discussion

3/8/01-Fifth Group Meeting

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Group Drawing

☞☞Group Discussion

3/15/01-Sixth Group Meeting

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Goals Worksheet

☞☞Magazine Cut-out Exercise

☞☞Group Discussion

3/22/01-Seventh Group Meeting

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Cost-Benefit Exercise-Going to Class Can Be Fun

☞☞Group Discussion

3/29/01-Eighth Group Meeting

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Summer School-Follow up Appointments

☞☞Group Discussion

4/5/01-Ninth Group Meeting, w/ Lisa Sheftman, CSUMB SDR Representative

☞☞Check-Ins

☞☞Presentation and Discussion

☞☞Pizza

4/12/01-Spring Break

☞☞NO GROUP

4/19/01-Tenth Group Meeting

☞☞Client group leaders begin group

☞☞Check-ins

☞☞INITIATIVE! Exercise

Hartnell Peer Support Group Curriculum Spring 2001 Semester (continued)

4/26/01-Eleventh Group Meeting

~~✓~~~~✓~~Check-Ins

~~✓~~~~✓~~Picture Releases and Picture Taking

5/3/01-CASRA Conference

~~✓~~~~✓~~NO GROUP

5/10/01-Twelfth Group Meeting

~~✓~~~~✓~~Check-Ins

~~✓~~~~✓~~Conflict Resolution Handouts

5/17/01-Thirteenth Group Meeting

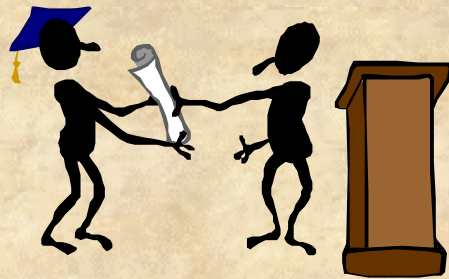
~~✓~~~~✓~~Check-Ins

~~✓~~~~✓~~Financial Aid Workshop

6/8/01-SEES Barbecue-Central Park

~~✓~~~~✓~~Presentation of Certificates of Attendance and Participation

INTERIM/Supported Employment and Education Services (SEES)



and Kristina Baker, CHHS
Class of 2001, present:

Peer Support Group: New and Improved Setting, Curriculum, and Service Options

Serves clients with:

- ✎ Schizophrenia
- ✎ Bipolar Disorder
- ✎ Schizo-affective Disorder



Currently attending or considering attending:
📖 Hartnell College

About the clients:



- ✎ Approximately 2% of general population.
- ✎ Median educational level is over 12 years.
- ✎ 20% to 50% have some college experience.
- ✎ Usually education was disrupted due to onset of psychiatric symptoms.

SEES serves:



- ✎ Approximately 200 clients per year.
- ✎ Approximately 70 clients receiving educational services.
- ✎ Approximately 30 clients currently enrolled, or wishing to enroll at Hartnell College.



SEES provides:

- ✎ Assistance with registration
- ✎ Financial Aid
- ✎ Program planning
- ✎ Obtaining accommodations
- ✎ Time management
- ✎ Study skills training
- ✎ Peer support groups
- ✎ Peer counseling



What's the Problem?

- ☹ Mainstreamed "Connect for Success" program.
- ☹ Lack of a private meeting space.
- ☹ Little structure.
- ☹ Low attendance.

**LOWERED
EFFECTIVENESS FOR
PEER SUPPORT!**



What's the Solution?



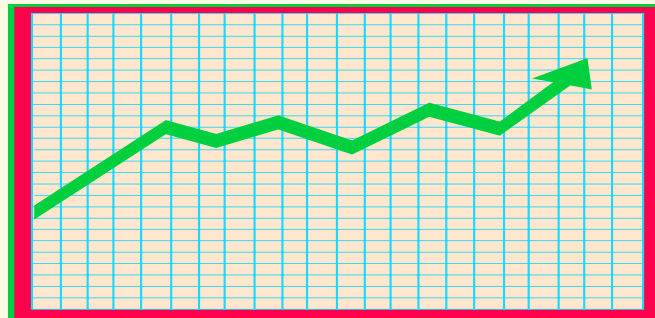
- ☺ Private classroom setting.
- ☺ Incentives for attendance.
- ☺ Snacks, sodas in classroom, occasional pizza.
- ☺ Group check-in and individual problem-solving.
- ☺ Simple, strength-oriented curriculum.

**INCREASED
EFFECTIVENESS FOR
PEER SUPPORT!**



What have been the results?

- 👍 Group attendance has more than doubled.
- 👍 Eight clients have attended at least 4 times.
- 👍 Some clients adopting leadership roles.
- 👍 An achievement-based atmosphere.



The curriculum:



Handouts and worksheets:

Feelings

The Power of Music

Going to Class Can Be Fun

Initiative!

Conflict Resolution

Group art projects:

Group drawing

Individual collages

Guest Speakers:

Sue Ellen Stringer, MSW

Lisa Sheftman of SDR, CSUMB



A case in point...



- ✍ Developed interest in ceramics.
- ✍ Attends art and business classes at Hartnell.
- ✍ Currently works with Department of Rehabilitation to develop own ceramic ware business.
- ✍ Attends support group in addition to regular classes.
- ✍ Shares problems and solutions with fellow students facing similar challenges.

How has group helped?...

- 👍 Regular time and meeting place.
- 👍 Structured curriculum based on common problems.
- 👍 Check-ins before, during and after group exercises.
- 👍 Reward system and other incentives.



Summary of Capstone:

📖 Students' talents nurtured and enriched in a population whose potential has historically been ignored.

😊 Support

😊 Bonding

😊 Academic and vocational achievement

